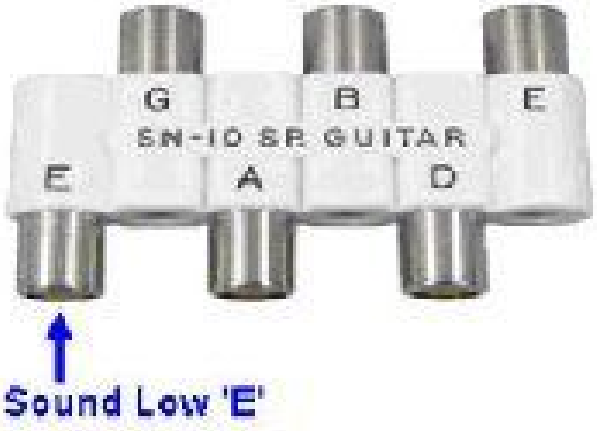
WIRES'N WOOD

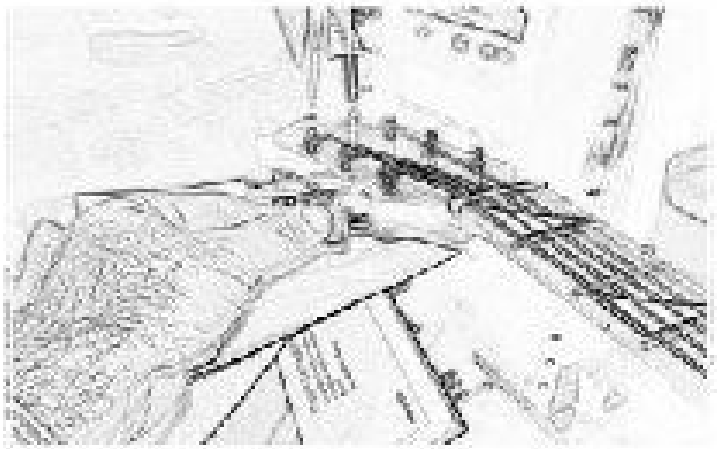
HOW TO TUNE YOUR GUITAR.

Wires'N Wood thought it might be useful to show the beginner guitar player a good way to set a guitar up to standard tuning. First of all let me say that it is very important that you always tune your guitar to proper pitch before playing it. If you tune to non-standard pitch you won't be able to play with other musicians. If you regularly sing along with a non-standard tuned instrument then you may have trouble matching your voice to other singers and musicians when it comes time to perform with them. Also if you tune a guitar too high you may break stings or warp the neck and lift the top of your guitar. Tuning a guitar too low may warp the neck also. If you're breaking stings while tuning a guitar to standard pitch there is an issue with your guitar that needs to be addressed. All 6-string guitars are designed to be tuned up to standard pitch.

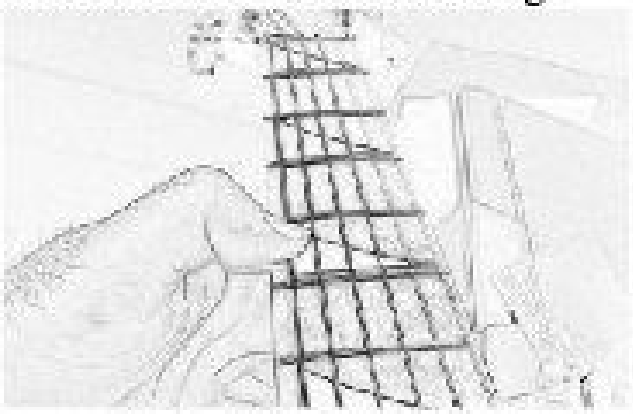
The tools I recommend for this task are a pitch pipe and a digital tuner. You can do without a digital tuner but for precisions sake, it's best to have one. Some digital tuners have a microphone built in to pick up the sound of the string you are striking. To use these you must have absolute silence while tuning. Other electric tuners pick the sound up off the wood of the Head Stock of the guitar. These can tune effectively in a noisy environment. I like the Intelli-600 chromatic tuner as it works in a noisy room and is relatively accurate and very easy to use.

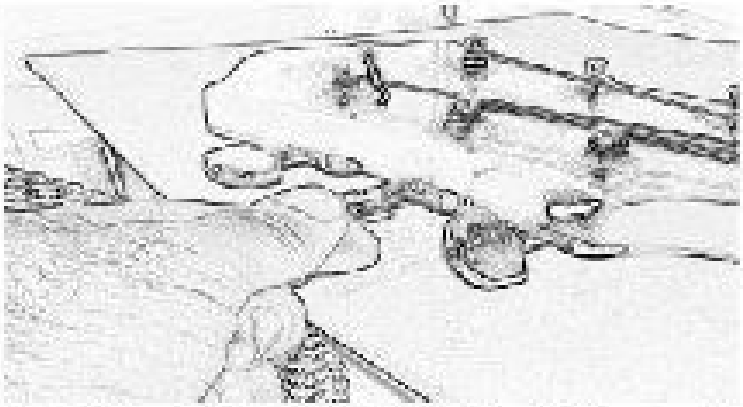
Step 1: Now to begin tuning blow the low 'E' pipe on your Pitch Pipe. Then strike the 6th or low 'E' string on your guitar. This will be the thickest string on the neck of your guitar. Now turn the corresponding tuner for this string until the sound being made by the pipe and the low 'E' string seem to be approximately the same pitch. O.K, from here on in you should not need the Pitch Pipe. As you turn the tuner, tightening the string will increase its pitch, while loosening the string will decrease its pitch. If the pitch of a string is too low we say that it is FLAT. If the Pitch of the string is too high we say that its SHARP. We want each string to be neither sharp nor flat. Once this has been accomplished with the low 'E' string then it is time to move on to the next string.



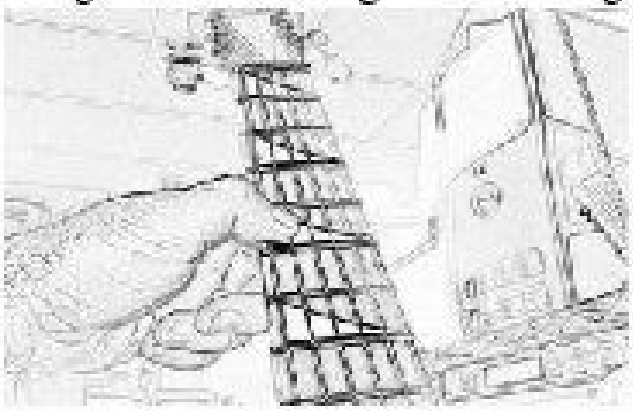


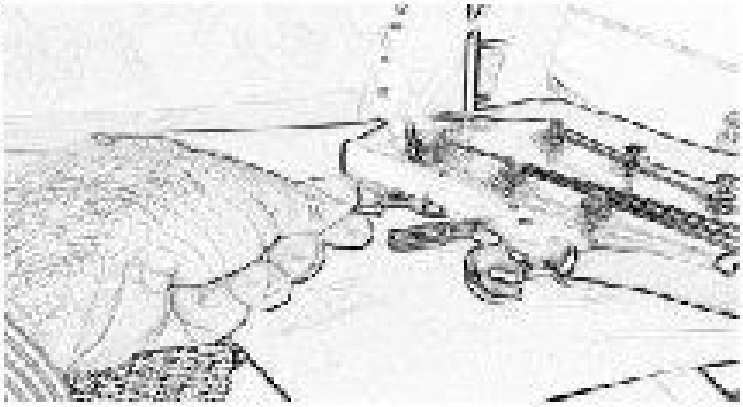
Step 2: Press and hold down the low 'E' or 6th string behind the 5th Fret on the guitar neck. Now strike the 6th string again. The pitch that the 6th string is now making is the pitch that our 'A' or 5th string needs to match. In effect, our low 'E' string has now become our Pitch Pipe for our 'A' or 5th string. Strike the 'A' or 5th string and adjust it's tuner until the pitch of this string matches the fingered low 'E' string. Once the sounds match move on to the next string.



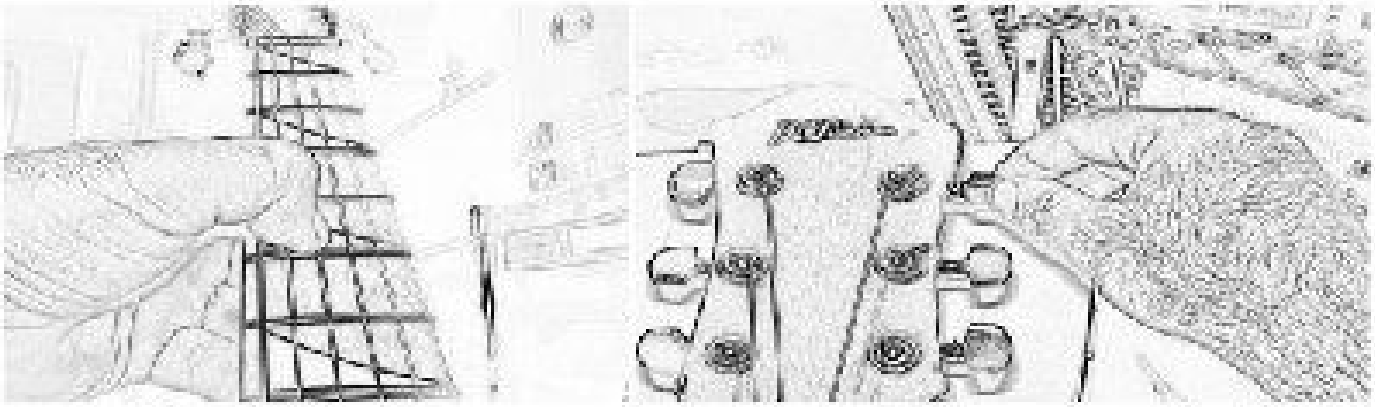


Step 3: Press and hold down the 'A' or 5th string behind the 5th Fret on the guitar neck. Now strike the 5th string again. The pitch that the 5th string is now making is the pitch that our 'D' or 4th string needs to match. The 'A' string is now the Pitch Pipe for the 'D' or 4th string. Strike the 'D' or 4th string and adjust it's tuner until the pitch of this string matches the fingered 'A' string. Once the sounds match move on to the next string.

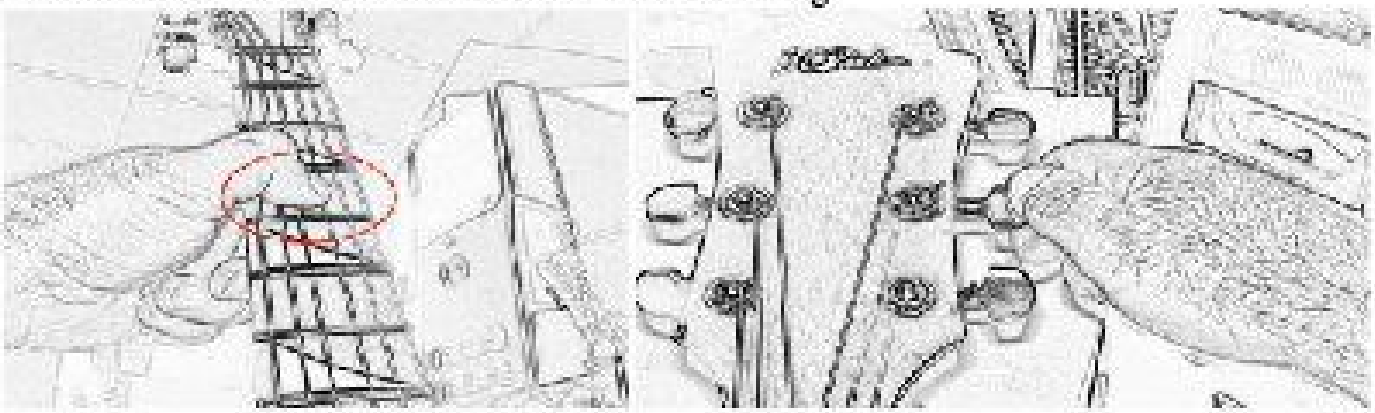




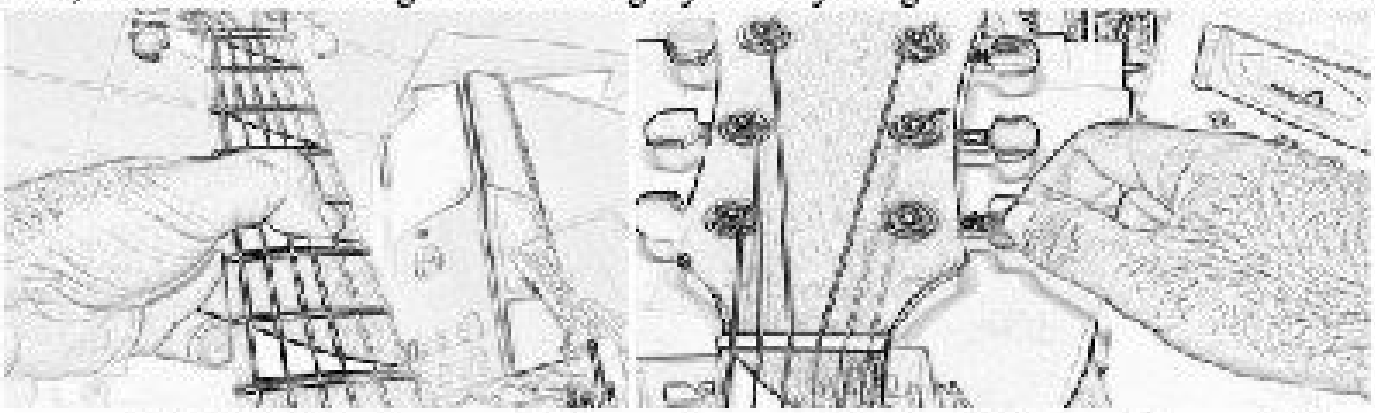
Step 4: O.K, by now I'm sure you see a pattern appearing. Press and hold down the 'D' or 4th string behind the 5th Fret on the guitar neck. Now strike the 4th string again. The pitch that the 4th string is now making is the pitch that our 'G' or 3rd string needs to match. The 'D' string is now the Pitch Pipe for the 'G' or 3rd string. Strike the 'G' or 3rd string and adjust it's tuner until the pitch of this string matches the fingered 'D' string. Once the sounds match move on to the next string.



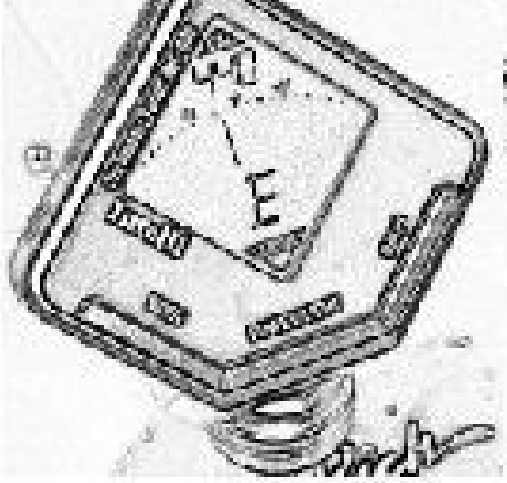
Step 5: O.K, the pattern is about to change slightly. Press and hold down the 'G' or 3rd string behind the 4th Fret on the guitar neck. Now strike the 3rd string again. The pitch that the 3rd string is now making is the pitch that our 'B' or 2nd string needs to match. The 'G' string is now the Pitch Pipe for the 'B' or 2nd string. Strike the 'B' or 2nd string and adjust it's tuner until the pitch of this string matches the fingered 'G' string. Once the sounds match move on to the next string.



Step 6: Back to the original pattern. Press and hold down the 'B' or 2nd string behind the 5th Fret on the guitar neck. Now strike the 2nd string again. The pitch that the 2nd string is now making is the pitch that our high 'E' or 1st string needs to match. The 'B' string is now the Pitch Pipe for the high 'E' or 1st string. Strike the high 'E' or 1st string and adjust it's tuner until the pitch of this string matches the fingered 'B' string. O.K, that's the last string. You've roughly tuned your guitar. Now its time to fine tune it.



Step 7: Fine tune each string using your Electronic Tuner. As you strike each string note where, on the tuner's display, the hand settles. If the hand points to the left of center the string is FLAT. Tighten the string using the corresponding tuner. If the hand points right of center the string is SHARP. Loosen off the string a little using the tuner. If the hand points directly at the center point of the display the string is in tune. Move on to the next string. When all the strings have been fine tuned once start **Step 7** again. Tightening or loosening any one string can effect the tuning of the others.



String FLAT
Tighten string
with corresponding
Tuner

String SHARP
loosen string
with corresponding
Tuner

String in tune.
no adjustment
nesscesary.

Your guitar should now be properly tuned.